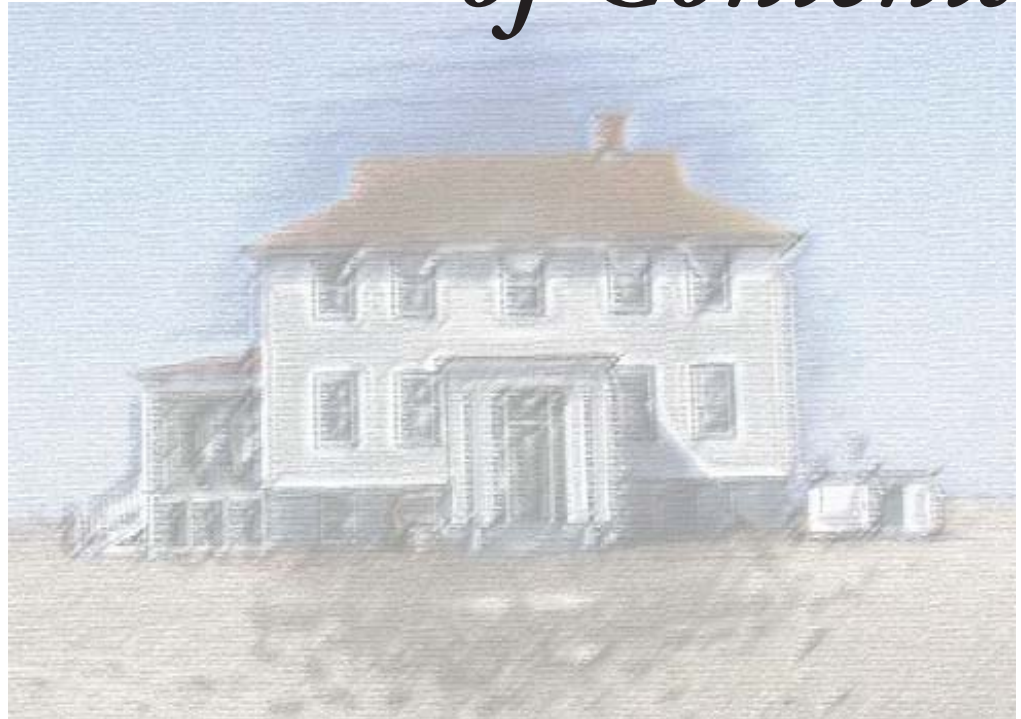


# *Summary & Table of Contents*



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## Summary

Assateague Island National Seashore (the park) has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze several alternatives relating to potential future uses and treatment of the Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station (the Station), a historic former Coast Guard Facility transferred to the National Park Service (NPS) in 1967.

The Station is located on the southern tip of Assateague Island, on Toms Cove Hook (the hook), and is within the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge which is managed by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The Station complex is considered to be a fine example of a period Coast Guard station located in a protected cove, allowing for more successful rescue operations. The complex consists of the station headquarters or 'station house' built in 1922, a cove-side boat house built in 1938 which includes a wharf and breakwater, a garage and a guard tower. The station complex was in use by the Coast Guard from 1922 to 1967.

The 1984 Statement of Significance reads: "Assateague Beach Coast Guard Station is a good example of a facility of this period located on a bay, cove, or sound, as opposed to a station such as Pope's Island Life-Saving Station located on a beach. During storms, in answering calls for assistance, it was frequently impossible for the crews of beach stations to launch their surfboats through the roaring breakers, while the Coast Guardsmen posted at an inlet station, such as Assateague Beach, could take their craft out through the comparatively calmer waters of the cove."

Formerly utilized as seasonal housing by the park, the Station has not been used regularly since 2002 due to problems accessing the Station by land during the breeding season of the threatened Piping Plover and outstanding maintenance and repair needs. This EA analyzes alternatives to determine the most appropriate course of action regarding the Station, taking into account its historic nature as well as the sensitive natural environment in which it is located.

Alternatives analyzed in this EA include Alternative A, the **No-action** alternative which proposes to maintain current management practices of stabilization and minimal rehabilitation with occasional short-term active use such as housing for visiting researchers and as storage; Alternative B which proposes **Rehabilitation for Adaptive Use** to accommodate a range of uses that fall under the umbrella of environmental research and education; Alternative C which proposes **Relocation** of the Station buildings off of Assateague Island by a management entity other than NPS; and Alternative D which proposes **Demolition** of the structures, rehabilitation of the site and management of the site as a natural landscape.

**The environmentally preferred alternative is Alternative B.** The environmentally preferred alternative takes into consideration both the natural and historic/cultural resources associated with the alternative. Alternative B would preserve the historic integrity of the Station complex by rehabilitating the structures for adaptive reuse to accommodate research and educational programs. The structures would be rehabilitated using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. This alternative would protect the piping plover and other sensitive wildlife and their habitats by incorporating preservation and protection lessons in the education program.



The Station House.

*This EA analyzes alternatives to determine the most appropriate course of action regarding the Station, taking into account its historic nature as well as the sensitive natural environment in which it is located.*

**The preferred alternative is Alternative B.** This alternative best accomplishes the task of preserving the Station complex in its historic landscape, thereby maintaining its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. By developing partnerships with groups or institutions interested in utilizing the Station for compatible research and education activities, it is expected that new funding resources would become available to augment federal expenditures for maintenance and rehabilitation. In turn, improved Station facilities would support enhanced programs of environmental research and education, and thereby assist in achieving the park's overall goals for resource management and interpretation.



DRAFT



Abandoned boat.

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